

not *intend* to restrain the rage of the waters: but the statement is not true in fact. The lower strata, so far as man has yet examined, are very far from being constantly, or even generally, heavier than the superincumbent ones. And certainly solidification by no means implies a greater density than fluidity: the density of Jupiter is one fourth, that of Saturn less than one seventh, of that of the earth. If an ocean of water were poured into the cavities upon the surface of Saturn, its equilibrium would *not* be stable. It would leave its bed on one side of the globe; and the planet would finally be composed of one hemisphere of water and one of land. If the Earth had an ocean of a fluid six times as heavy as water, (quicksilver is thirteen times as heavy,) we should have, in like manner, a dry and a fluid hemisphere. Our inland rivers would probably never be able to reach the shores, but would be dried up on their way, like those which run in torrid deserts; perhaps the evaporation from the ocean would never reach the inland mountains, and we should have no rivers at all. Without attempting to imagine the details of such a condition, it is easy to see, that to secure the existence of a different one is an end which is in harmony with all that we see of the preserving care displayed in the rest of creation.\*

\* The stability of the axis of rotation about which the earth revolves, has sometimes been adduced as an instance of preservative care. The stability, however, would follow necessarily, if the earth, or its superficial parts, were originally fluid; and that they were so is an opinion widely received, both among astronomers and geologists. The original fluidity of the earth is probably a circumstance depending upon the general scheme of creation; and cannot with propriety be considered with reference to one particular result. We shall therefore omit any further consideration of this argument.